



## The Star-Ledger

### Animal rights activists' trial veers from norm Police gear up for protests and celebrities

Thursday, June 02, 2005

BY JOHN P. MARTIN  
Star-Ledger Staff

Prospective jurors in the prosecution of six animal rights activists arrived at the federal courthouse in Trenton yesterday and soon discovered this might not be a typical trial.

Armed federal police patrolled the courthouse perimeter as demonstrators wielding bullhorns and placards staged a sidewalk rally. Courtroom spectators had to pass through two metal detectors. And the potential witness list ranged from animal rights leaders in Great Britain to actress Kim Basinger and talk-show host Sean Hannity.

By the end of the first day of jury selection, all but 26 of the first 125 prospective jurors were disqualified because of scheduling or other conflicts. U.S. District Judge Mary Cooper asked the rest to return on Monday, and she told them to remove their juror badges before leaving the building.

Opening arguments could begin next week against the six activists and the U.S. chapter of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, or SHAC. For six years, the group has been trying to close Huntingdon Life Sciences, a British firm with a New Jersey lab that tests drugs and chemicals on thousands of rats, dogs and monkeys each year.

Prosecutors contend the defendants, often using the Internet, conspired to threaten and terrorize employees, clients and associates of the lab testing company by encouraging vandalism or harassment against them.

The defendants, 20-something activists from four different states arrested by the FBI last year, argue they are not responsible for acts by others and that the indictment violates their right to free speech.

Each was charged under the strengthened Animal Enterprise Terrorism Act, a rarely used statute, and the case is being monitored by activists and the companies and industries they often target.

Former SHAC USA President Kevin Kjoaas, Lauren Gazzola and Jacob Conroy, all of Pinole, Calif., were named in all six counts of the indictment. The others are Darius Fullmer of Hamilton, N.J., Joshua Harper of Seattle and Andrew Stepanian of Huntington, N.Y. A seventh defendant, John McGee of Edison, was dropped from the case.

The judge agreed last month to seal jurors' names from the public record, pointing to the allegations of harassment. But Cooper stopped short of limiting or banning courthouse demonstrations, which prosecutors argued could be used to intimidate jurors.

About three dozen demonstrators lined sidewalk barricades for several hours yesterday, occasionally breaking into chants and holding signs or photos depicting mutilated animals.

A spokeswoman for the group, Andrea Lindsay, said they came to support the defendants and to express their First Amendment rights. "It seems that they've been taken away from (the defendants)," she said.

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Mike Caulfield, Huntingdon Life Sciences general manager, issued a statement calling the defendants "a small group of individuals with an extremist point of view" and expressing confidence they will be convicted.

"This case is about whether researchers, who spend their careers working to save lives, should have to fear for their own," he said.

Dozens of witnesses are expected to be called during the trial, which the judge said will last until mid-August.

Neither prosecutors nor the defense attorneys revealed much of their case to the jury pool yesterday. But their lists of potential witnesses and people whose names might emerge in testimony, read aloud in court, suggests the case is likely to extend beyond the activities of the defendants.

Executive Assistant U.S. Attorney Charles McKenna told jurors the prosecution could include testimony from or references to Greg Avery, who founded SHAC in 1999 in Great Britain, and to Brian Cass, the Huntingdon managing director who was beaten outside his home in England.

McKenna also mentioned Daniel San Diego, a California man sought in connection with two pipe bombs that exploded in 2003 outside the offices of Chiron, a biotech company in Emeryville, Calif., that once did business with Huntingdon.

Isabel McGinty, the defense attorney for Kionaas, said the defense witness list includes Basinger, who once joined a protest outside Huntingdon's Franklin Township laboratory; Hannity, who once interviewed one of the defendants; Avery and his wife Natasha, and two prominent activists, California surgeon Jerry Vlasak and Texas professor Steven Best, who have advocated for more aggressive actions by animal rights supporters.

McGinty, who lost two bids to delay the trial, declined to say if the defense would call each to testify. She said they were "potential witnesses."

Jury selection resumes this morning.

John P. Martin covers federal courts and law enforcement. He may be reached at [jmartin@starledger.com](mailto:jmartin@starledger.com) or (973) 622-3405.

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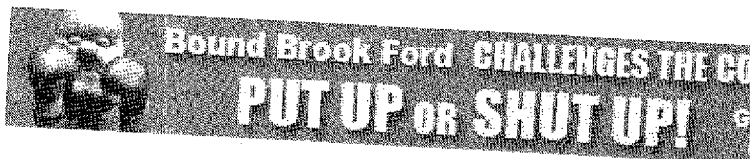
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## Trial of animal rights activists begins

**Seven charged with conspiracy to terrorize animal test lab.**

By TOM BALDWIN  
Gannett State Bureau

TRENTON -- Animal rights and free-speech protesters gathered outside the federal courthouse Wednesday, at the start of a trial for seven people accused in a rarely prosecuted case of domestic terrorism.

"Most of us are trying to make a difference," said Steve Heuler, a financial industry executive from Hackettstown.

"Our rights are under attack with this indictment," said Debra Baker, who rode a bus 10 hours from Syracuse, N.Y., to join the protest.

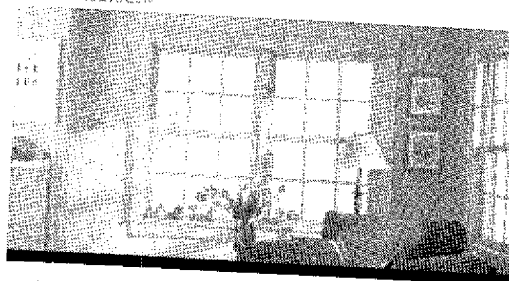
The U.S. Department of Justice has charged seven people with conspiring to commit animal-enterprise terrorism aimed at Huntingdon Life Sciences, a British company that performs testing on animals for medical research at a lab in Franklin Township, Somerset County.

Authorities have said the seven went beyond merely demonstrating. They said the defendants are part of a group that committed criminal activity by threatening violence and encouraging vandalism against the company, its employees and clients.

"This case is about whether researchers, who spend their careers working to save lives, should have to fear for their own," Huntingdon spokesman Mike Caulfield said. "It's about whether the defendants in this case -- a small group of individuals with an extremist point of view -- should be allowed to stalk, harass and terrorize individuals and their family members simply because they work for a company that commercially supports medical research."

Many of the charges are connected to Internet sites that prosecutors say the seven used to name potential targets. It was unclear if the seven ever launched an attack, in person or by way of the Internet.

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Protesters outside the Clarkson S. Fisher Courthouse argued that free speech means freedom to exchange ideas over the Internet. The demonstration was peaceful.

U.S. District Judge Mary Cooper began the day with jury selection, said Andrea Lindsay, a spokeswoman for the seven. She said Cooper had told the courtroom, which was closed after the session began, to expect the case to run into August.

The defendants call themselves the "SHAC7," for the group Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty.

They are the first in New Jersey to face the expanded federal Animal Enterprise Protection Act, a law adopted after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attack that equates their charges with domestic terrorism.

Charged are Kevin Kjonas, 27, identified as president of SHAC; Lauren Gazzola, 26, SHAC campaign coordinator; Jacob Conroy, 29; Joshua Harper, 30; Darius Fullmer, 28; John McGee, 26; and Andrew Stepanian, 26.

All were arrested last May. Kjonas, Gazzola and Conroy are former New Jersey residents who were living in California when they were arrested. McGee is from Edison, and Fullmer is from Hamilton. Harper is from Seattle, and Stepanian is from Huntington, N.Y.

Their lone conspiracy count carries a maximum penalty of three years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. There are three counts of interstate stalking and one count of conspiracy to commit interstate stalking, each carrying a maximum penalty of five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine.

Andrea Lindsay, spokeswoman for the seven, said, "The federal government is really cheapening the word 'terrorism.'" She added that trying the case in New Jersey worried her because, "New Jersey is the medicine cabinet of America. ... They put information on Web sites and spoke at conferences, and somehow that amounts to terrorism."

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## Jury Selection Begins In Animal Activist Trial

Jun 1, 2005 8:00 pm US/Eastern

Jury selection began today in the case of seven animal welfare activists charged under domestic terrorism laws.

Prosecutors say the seven used a Web site to incite vandalism and harassment of employees of Huntingdon Life Sciences and associated companies. Huntingdon has a research lab in East Millstone that does animal testing.

The defendants put the names and addresses of Huntingdon employees' names on a Web site with updates after an employee was targeted. They are members of an organization called "Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty."

Federal officials have described animal welfare groups like the Huntingdon organization one of the biggest domestic terrorism threats. But the organization's supporters say the government is attacking their freedom of free speech.

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Posted on Wed, Jun. 01, 2005

### Protests mark beginning of animal rights group trial

DAVID PORTER  
Associated Press

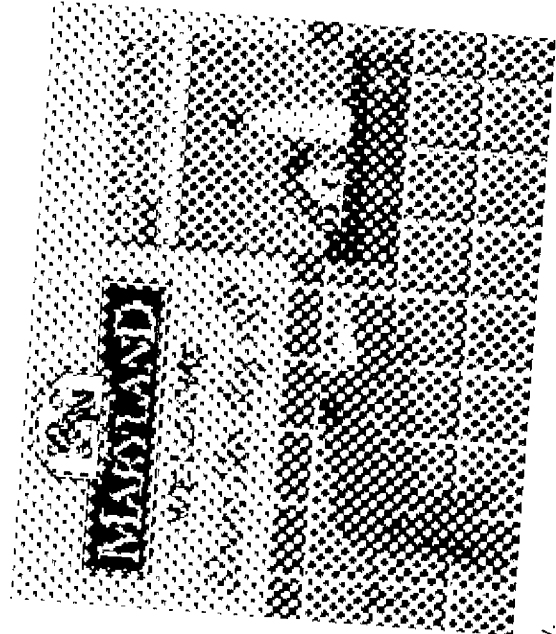
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Inside, Judge Mary Cooper told prospective jurors to expect the trial to last into August. Opening statements are expected to begin Monday or Tuesday.

The seven defendants - Kevin Kijonaa, 27; Lauren Gazzola, 26; Jacob Conroy, 29; Joshua Harper, 30; Darius Fuller, 28; John McGee, 26, and Andrew Stepanian, 26 - are members of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, a group that has targeted Huntingdon Life Sciences, a Britain-based company with a research laboratory in East

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Millstone that uses animals to test the safety of drugs and chemicals.

They were arrested in May 2004. All but Harper, of Seattle, and Stepanian, of Huntington, N.Y., are current or former New Jersey residents. The group lists a post office box in Philadelphia on its Web site but currently operates out of the San Francisco area, according to Andrea Lindsay, a spokeswoman for the group. Lindsay did not provide a specific office location.

The defendants face conspiracy and interstate stalking counts that carry maximum penalties of between three and five years, plus fines up to \$250,000. They are the first people to be charged in New Jersey under the federal Animal Enterprise Protection Act, a 1992 law that was expanded in 2002 and equates their alleged activities with domestic terrorism.

The indictment alleges the group incited others to commit crimes of vandalism and harassment against employees of Huntingdon and companies that did business with Huntingdon by putting employees' names, addresses and other personal information on a Web site. Later, the group would post reports of the incidents on the site.

Lindsay said Wednesday the group does not support activities that harm people.

"SHAC has never told people to go out and intimidate people," she said. "We advocate putting pressure on these companies and employees."




To supporters of the defendants, the trial is less about animal welfare than it is about First Amendment rights. "It's a definitely a free speech issue. When is the line blurred?" said Andy Roth, a documentary filmmaker from New York who has followed the case since last year. "I like animals - I have two dogs that were rescued - but this is not an animal rights film. It's a human rights issue, and about what precedent this could set for other groups, like PETA or Greenpeace."

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In testimony before the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, Lewis said groups like SHAC, the Animal Liberation Front and the Earth Liberation Front are "way out in front" of groups like right-wing extremists, the Ku Klux Klan and anti-abortion groups in terms of the amount of damage and the number of crimes they commit.

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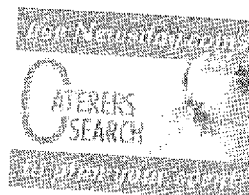
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By DAVID PORTER  
Associated Press Writer

June 1, 2005, 5:58 PM EDT



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## AP State News

### Protests mark beginning of animal rights group trial

By DAVID PORTER, Associated Press Writer, The Associated Press

June 01, 2005

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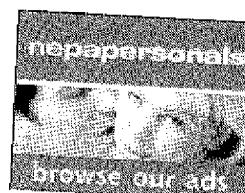
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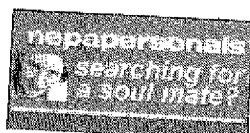
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Posted on Wed, Jun. 01, 2005

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TRENTON, N.J. - Chanting slogans and carrying signs proclaiming "Free Speech Is Not Terrorism" and "Puppy Killers," about 70 animal welfare protesters demonstrated outside U.S. District Court Wednesday as jury selection began in the trial of seven activists charged under domestic terrorism laws.

Inside, Judge Mary Cooper told prospective jurors to expect the trial to last into August. Opening statements are expected to begin Monday or Tuesday.

The seven defendants - Kevin Kijonaa, 27; Lauren Gazzola, 26; Jacob Conroy, 29; Joshua Harper, 30; Darius Fuller, 28; John McGee, 26, and Andrew Stepanian, 26 - are members of Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, a group that has targeted Huntingdon Life Sciences, a Britain-based company with a research laboratory in East Millstone that uses animals to test the safety of drugs and chemicals.

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